of Commitments to GATT that concessional sales through the PDS and other schemes for sales at subsidised prices with the objective of meeting basic food requirements as a social safety net are in conformity with the provisions of paragraph 4 of Annex 2 and the footnote to the Agreement. It is thus lclear that there is no need for any modifications in the existing PDS in India.

Value and Weight of Imported Newsprint

3682. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state the value and weight of Newsprint imported from foreign countries during the period 1993-94?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): The quantity and value of newsprint imported during April-December, 1993 the latest period for which such data are available are given below:—

Quantity ('000 M.Tons)	Value Rs. Crores	US $ Million
221	318	10L (101)

Source : Foreign Trade Statistics of India, December, 1993, (DGCI&S, Calcutta)

Television warnings about Indian Tea in Russia

3683. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government are aware of the television warnings to the consumer in Russia about the consumption of Indian tea;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof stating the reasons for the Russian Government to warn the consumers taking Indian tea; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to counter the Russian campaign against Indian tea;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) Tea Board's Office at Moscow reported that in a programme telecast on Moscow television channel (in Russian language) during the last week of September, 1993, a green tea packet labelled as 'Indian tea' was shown, followed by that appeared to be a spread out coarse material which looked like wood chips. There is no mention in the report of the Tea Board's Office at Moscow of any warning against the perils of consuming Indian tea in the said TV programme. Since the programme was in Russian language the meaning could not be deciphered by Director Tea Promotion, Moscow. However, according to Director Tea Promotion, Moscow it purported to be a display of inferior Indian tea. This programme has not been repeated and consequently it has not been possible to ascertain the exact nature and condition of the above-mentioned specific TV programme.

Director Tea Promotion, Moscow has reported that a lot of bad quality tea packets are entering into Russia from different sources. Such teas include Chinese, Indonesian, Vietnamese, Argentinean teas etc. and many of these teas are reportedly being labelled as 'Indian tea'. It has not been established that the teas shown on Russian television was the Indian tea.

(c) As part of confidence building measures, representatives of Tea Board's Moscow Office have been meeting buyers for resolving their problems and assuring them of the quality and reliability of Indian tea. In addition to this, promotional campaigns for Indian tea through media (press and television), tea sampling demonstrations, participation in consumer exhibition etc. have also been planned by Tea Board's Moscow Office which will commence soon.

Special Cell in Directorate General of Foreign Trade

3684. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have set up a special cell in the office of Directorate General of Foreign Trade to attend complaints made by foreign buyers ;

(b) if so, the details of complaints received during the past three years;

(c) whether a large number of complaints from foreign buyers are also pending in various foreign mission;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps DGFT propose to take to solve those disputes ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir. A Trade, Dispute Cell has been set up in the Office of Director General of Foreign Trade to attend complaints made by Foreign buyers.

(b) From the year 1991-92 upto 1-3-94, a total number of 371 complaints were received in the Trade Dispute Cell. Broadly the nature of these complaints cover the areas of quality, quantity, price, delay and related claims, non-performance/non-fulfilment of agreement, nonpayment/delayed payment of agency commission, complaints from foreign tourists regarding purchases made in India etc.

(c) and (d) : 187 complaints of foreign buyers were referred by the foreign missions to the Office of DGFT during the past three years. These broadly cover the areas stated in part (b) of the reply.

Information relating to the number of complaints from foreign buyers pending in various foreign missions is not available in the Office of DGFT.

(e) Regional Standing Committees on Quality complaints have been set up to resolve such complaints at Bombay, Calcutta, Cochin, Delhi, Madras. Ahmedabad. Bangalore, Kanpur, Ludhiana and Hyderabad. These Committees are chaired by the respective Joint Director General of Foreign Trade with Members from the Bureau of Indian Standards, Office of Agricultural Marketing Advisor, Small Industries Service Institute. RBI, Invitees from EPC/ Commodity Board/Trade Association and Export Inspection Agency as Member Secretary. Meetings are held on a regular basis and ample opportunity is given to the exporters to rectify and settle the complaint in an amicable manner. In case of non-compliance, appropriate action against the erring exporters is taken.

MPEDA statement regarding acquaculture in Andhra Pradesh

3685. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the average life of an acquaculture farm is around 10 years;